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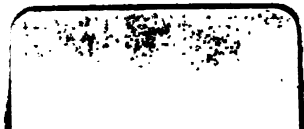
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ANNEX



THE
BOOK OF SPORTS.



BY ROBIN CARVER.

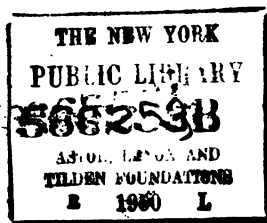
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PREFACE.

IN preparing this little work, it has been a principal part of my object to serve the cause of physical education by directing the attention of young persons to sports of a healthful and invigorating tendency. Games of a mischievous or exceptionable character, I have avoided, and substituted in their stead brief sketches, that might not be less attractive and interesting to boys.

For a portion of my materials, as well as for some of the embellishments, I have been indebted to the English edition of the Boy's Own Book, the price of which work places it

beyond the reach of most young people in this country. Wishing that my readers may derive some benefit and amusement from these pages, and that they may be incited thereby to salutary exercises, both of the mind and of the body, I now bid them farewell. .

R. C.

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THE BOOK OF SPORTS.

CHAPTER I.

SIMPLE SPORTS AND PASTIMES.

MY young friends have often come to me, after they have been dismissed from school, and begged me to think of some new sport for their amusement. Now, though somewhat of an old man, I have not forgotten the games and pastimes of my boyhood. Many of the events of my youth are fresh in my memory, while those of later years have quite faded away. How careful should the young be to avoid every act, upon which they cannot always reflect with pleasure, when they know, that the remembrance of it will last so long !

As I cannot have all my young friends about me at once, to tell them stories and assist them in their games, I have concluded to write a Book of Sports, purposely 'for American boys.' I would have you fond of exercise and of being in the open air ; capable of bearing the winter's cold without injury, and of exerting yourselves with strength and agility.

There are many sports, which may help you to attain these desirable ends, and which are not only amusing but beneficial to young people.

In this little book, I intend to give you a description of such sports, as may be likely to afford you either healthful exercise or innocent amusement. I shall tell you some pleasant stories as I go along ; and you will not be displeased if I occasionally mingle some useful piece of information with my descriptions. I shall begin with a very simple sport ; but it is one, from which I dare say you have derived too much entertainment to think it unworthy of a place here.

PUSS IN THE CORNER.

This lively game is played by five only. The place usually chosen for the sport is a square room or yard. Each of the four corners is occupied by a player: the fifth, who is called Puss, stands in the centre. The game now commences. The players exchange corners in all directions: it is the object of the one who stands out, to occupy any one of the corners, which may remain vacant for an instant during the exchanges. When he succeeds in so doing, that player, who is left without a corner becomes puss. This game may be played in any place, where there are four trees or posts, which may form the four corners of a square.

BLIND MAN'S BUFF.

This old and popular pastime is too well known to need any description. There is, however, a variation of it, called Shadow Buff, which may not

be so familiar to you. A table with a lamp upon it is placed at some distance from a wall, between which and the table, one of the players is seated on a low stool. The other Players then walk one by one, between the table and Buffy, limping, hopping, and grimacing as they please, so as to distort their shadows on the wall. If Buffy can tell correctly and without turning his head, to whom any shadow belongs, the person so discovered takes his place.

SWINGING.

Do you like the exercise of swinging? There is a picture on the next page, which represents a little boy swinging between two trees, while his mother and brother are near. The weather is pleasant, and as he rises in the swing, the air rushes by his face as swift as it does 'to swallows on the wing.'

The construction of the swing is simple : two ropes of equal lengths are to be suspended from any strong branch or cross piece of timber ; at the



Swinging

bottom of these ropes, a seat is to be securely fastened, and the person, who takes the seat, must be set in motion by another on the ground ; a rope for this purpose may be fixed to the back part of the seat.

Care must be taken in swinging, that the two ropes are not twisted round each other, as accidents have often happened in this way. On some persons, swinging produces an effect, similar to that, which causes sea-sickness.

SEE-SAW.

A plank is placed across a piece of timber, or a low wall, and a player seats himself at each end. By a slight exertion, if the plank be properly balanced, each end rises and sinks alternately. It must be observed, that if the players be of unequal weight, he who is the heavier, must, to preserve the due equilibrium, make his end of the plank shorter

HUNT THE SLIPPER.

Several young persons sit on the ground in a circle, and one stands in the centre. The parties who are seated, pass round a slipper, so as to prevent, if possible, its being found by him standing, in the possession of any of them. In order that the player in the centre may know where the slipper is, it is occasionally tapped on the ground, and then suddenly handed to the right or left. When the slipper is found in the possession of any one in the circle, by the player who is hunting for it, the party with whom it is so found, has to take his turn at hunting the slipper.

THREAD THE NEEDLE.

This game may be played by a considerable number of boys, who all join hands, when the following dialogue takes place between the two out-

side players at each end of the line : ‘ How many miles to Babylon ? ’ ‘ Threescore and ten. ’ ‘ Can I get there by candle light ? ’ ‘ Yes, and back again. ’ ‘ Then open the gates without more ado, and let the king and his men pass through. ’ In obedience to this command, the player who stands at the opposite end of the line and the one next to him, lift their joined hands as high as possible ; the other outside player then approaches, runs under the hands thus elevated, and the whole line follows him without disuniting. This is threading the needle ; and the game may be continued in this way till you are tired.

HIDE AND SEEK.

This is a favorite game with children. A handkerchief, or something else, is concealed by one player, and the rest try to find it. The discoverer of the concealed article takes his turn next to hide

it. It is a custom in this game, for the boy who has hid the article, to encourage those who approach it, by telling them that they *burn*, and to warn them of their departure from it by saying, that they *freeze*.

KING OF THE CASTLE.

This is a simple but quite a lively sport. One player places himself at the top of a little mound or hillock ; he is the king of the castle, and he tries to keep possession of his post, as long as possible, against the attacks of his playmates, who endeavor one at a time to drive him off. If he be driven from his post, the player who dethrones him takes his place.

There is a sport somewhat similar to this, called the 'old man on the castle,' in which one boy, who is named the 'old man,' chases all who approach the spot, which he calls his castle. The last player whom he catches takes his place.

DICK, DUCK, AND DRAKE.

From this game comes the proverb, which is frequently applied to a spendthrift. 'He is making ducks and drakes of his money.' It is played by jerking, or what boys call skipping, or shying, bits of slate, or flat stones along the surface of a pond or river. If the thing thrown touches the water and rebounds once, it is a dick; if twice, a duck; if thrice, a drake. He who makes his slate or pebble rebound the greatest number of times wins the game.

BLOWING BUBBLES.

Many grown-up persons can recollect the time when a pipe with a little soap and water would make them happy for hours. This is a quiet and harmless amusement for children. Indeed there are many 'children of a larger growth,' who spend their time in blowing bubbles of a different but not profitable nature.



Blowing Bubbles.

CHAPTER II.

SPORTS WITH TOYS.

A VARIETY of healthful amusement may be pursued without the aid of toys ; but such additions help to diversify the entertainments of boyhood. I have told you about those simple and easy sports, which are usually practised in early youth. I will now tell you about those games, which are played with toys.

MARBLES.

The best marbles are imported from Holland, where, as I have been informed, they are manufactured, by grinding fragments of alabaster and of other stones, in an iron mill of a peculiar con-

struction. In this mill there are several partitions furnished with rasps, which turn with great velocity, by means of a stream of water ; and thus having rounded the stones, project them out of different holes for which their size may adapt them. Thus manufactured they are sent to America and other countries. There are as you know, inferior kinds of marbles, which are of home manufacture, and consist of baked clay, or vitrified earth. The marbles made of pink marble, with dark red veins, 'blood allies,' are preferred to all others.

One of the most common games at marbles is that of *knock-out*. Two or more may play at this game. He who begins, throws a marble gently against a wall, so that it rebounds to a distance not exceeding a yard ; a second player throws another marble against the wall, endeavoring to make it rebound, so as to strike or come within a span of the first ; if he can do neither, the first player takes up his own marble, and, in turn, strives to snop or span that of the second. The marble that is thus snopped or spanned, is won, and the winner begins

again. Where only two play, it is best to knock out two or three marbles each, alternately, before they begin to use those on the ground. In this case, a player may win his own marbles, as they are common stock when down, and take up which he pleases, to play with. Sometimes instead of throwing the marbles against a wall, the players shoot them along the ground. The winner is he who shoots his marble within a span of the other's. This game is called 'spans and snops.'

The game of *ring-taw* used to be a very popular sport some years ago. It is played in the following manner. A circle is drawn, on which each player puts as many marbles as may be agreed on. A line, called the offing, is then drawn at some distance, from which each in turn shoots at the ring. Shooting a marble out of the ring, entitles the shooter to go on again, and thus the ring may be sometimes cleared by a good player, before his companion or companions have a chance. After the first fire, the players return no more to the offing, but shoot, when their turn comes, from the

place where their marbles rested on the last occasion. Every marble struck out of the ring, is won by the striking party ; but if the taw, or marble, at any time remain in the ring, the player is out.

In the game of *arch-board* or *nine-holes*, the marbles are bowled at a board-set upright, resembling a bridge, with nine small arches, all of them numbered ; if the marble strike against the sides of the arches, it becomes the property of the boy to whom the board belongs ; but, if it go through any one of them, the bowler claims a number equal to the number upon the arch it passed through.

Sometimes holes are dug in the ground, into which the players try to drive their marbles. Sometimes a little pyramid of marbles is erected within a small circle, and the boy who shoots at it, has as many as he can drive out of the circle. One marble is given, for each time of shooting, to the owner of the pyramid. Those games at marbles which depend entirely upon chance, I hope are beneath your notice.

TOPS.

Humming-tops are easily used. After the string is wound about the upright piece, one end of it is taken in one hand, and the handle of the fork-piece in the other. The string is then pulled off with force, and the top is set a-going. Whip-top is an excellent amusement. The top is easily set up by twirling it with both hands on a smooth surface, and applying the whip with gentleness at first,



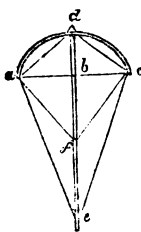
increasing the vigor of the blows, as the top gets firm on the peg. The peg-top is spun by quickly pulling away the string wound round it.

THE SLING.

To make a sling, you must cut out an oval piece of leather, about two inches wide at the broadest part. At each of the ends, fasten a leathern thong, or piece of cord. One of these cords, or thongs should be longer than the other. Place a stone in the broadest part of the leather, twist the longest thong twice or thrice round your hand, hold the other lightly between your thumb and fore-finger, whirl it round several times, let go the shorter thong, and the stone will be shot to a great distance. Great care should be taken in using the sling, lest mischief is done.

THE KITE.

The best form of constructing a kite is the following. The only pieces of wood necessary in the making of this, are a bow made of oak or walnut, and a straight lath. These are fastened to-



gether by twine, and when the frame is completed, it is pasted over with paper. The tail, which should be from ten to fifteen times the length of the kite, is made by tying bobs on a string, with a larger bob at the end of it.

Kites may be made of various shapes and sizes. Indeed they probably first received their name from having been originally constructed in the form of a bird of prey, called the kite. In China the flying of kites is much more practised than in this country ; and it is said, that their shape is always that of some bird.

I remember to have seen, some years ago, a kite which resembled a man. It was made of linen cloth, cut and painted for the purpose, and stretched on a light frame, so constructed as to resemble the outline of the human figure. It stood upright, and was dressed in a sort of jacket. Its arms were stretched out on each side, and its head was covered with a cap. The person who owned this kite could raise it, though the weather was calm, to a



Flying Kites.

great height. The wind gave to it a slight motion, which made it look like a man skating on the ice. It had altogether a very queer appearance, and did not fail to attract a great crowd of spectators.

Kites are often made square, as they are easiest to construct of that form. Boys frequently send up *messengers*, when their kite is safely balanced in the air. The messenger is a round piece of paper or pasteboard, which on being fixed upon the string, is blown along the line up to the kite.

The kite sometimes pulls so violently that it breaks the string, or twitches away from the hand, and is lost. Dr Franklin has said, that, with a good kite a man, unable to swim, might be sustained in the water, so as to pass from Dover to Calais. I have heard of a man, who travelled many miles along the road in a carriage drawn by two kites.

But the kite has served the cause of science as well as that of amusement. It was by means of the kite that Dr Franklin was able to make his

great discoveries in electricity, and to draw it from the clouds.

Did you ever hear the story of the sailors who mounted to the top of Pompey's pillar? If you have, it will bear repeating. Some English sailors once laid a wager, that they would drink a bowl of punch on the summit of Pompey's pillar, in Egypt. Now, this pillar is almost a hundred feet high, and it is quite smooth, so that there was no way of climbing to the top, even for sailors. In this dilemma, they obtained a kite, and flew it exactly over the pillar, so that when it came down on the opposite side, the string lay across the top of the capital.

By means of this string, they pulled a small rope over, and by this a larger one, that was strong enough to bear the weight of a man. A pulley was then fastened to the end of the large rope, and drawn close up to the upper edge of the column; and then, you see, they could easily hoist each other up. They did more; for they hoisted a flag

on the top, drank their bowl of punch, and won their wager.

THE SUCKER.

Cut a circular piece of stout leather ; bore a hole through its centre, and pass a string, with a knot to prevent the end escaping, through this hole. Soak the leather well in water before you use it ; when thoroughly soaked, place the leather on a stone, press it well down with your foot, and then taking the string, you may, by your sucker, raise a considerable weight.

You have often observed the ease and security with which flies walk upon a smooth wall, or a pane of glass, or even along the ceiling, with their bodies downward. The fact is, that their feet are provided with little cups, or suckers, which they alternately exhaust and fill with air ; by which means they are enabled to walk in every position, over the most slippery surfaces. In like manner, the walrus, or seal, is capable of climbing the masses of slippery ice with perfect security.

THE HOOP.

The trundling of the hoop is an old, but healthful pastime. It was as common with the Greeks and Romans as it is with boys of the present generation. It has the advantage of being a sport, which may be played by one person, although several players sometimes engage in it, and try who can keep their hoop rolling longest. Several tin squares are sometimes nailed to the inner part of the hoop, which produce, in the opinion of some lads, an agreeable jingle ; but it is apt to frighten the horses, whom they meet.



Kite and other Toys.

CHAPTER III.

GAMES WITH BALLS.

THE use of the ball was well known to the children, who played many hundred years ago. It is a favorite game still, and offers a good opportunity for the exercise of the limbs and the muscles. The games with the bat and ball are numerous, but somewhat similar. I will mention some of those, which I believe to be the most popular with boys.

BASE, OR GOAL BALL.

This game is known under a variety of names. It is sometimes called 'round ball,' but I believe

that 'base,' or 'goal ball' are the names generally adopted in our country. The players divide into two equal parties, and chance decides which shall have first innings. Four stones or stakes are placed from twelve to twenty yards asunder, as *a*, *b*, *c*, *d*, in the margin; another is put at *e*. One of the party, who is out, places himself at *e*. He tosses the ball gently toward *a*, on the right of which one of the *in-party* places himself, and strikes the ball, if possible, with his bat. If he miss three times, or if the ball, when struck, be caught by any of the players of the opposite side, who are scattered about the field, he is out, and another takes his place. If none of these accidents take place, on striking the ball he drops the bat, and runs toward *b*, or, if he can, to *c*, *d*, or even to *a* again. If, however, the boy who stands at *e*, or any of the out-players who may happen to have the ball, strike him with it in his progress from *a* to *b*, *b* to *c*, *c* to *d*, or *d* to *a*, he is out. Supposing he can only get to *b*, one of his partners takes the bat, and strikes at the ball in

turn. If the first player can only get to *c*, or *d*, the second runs to *b*, only, or *c*, as the case may be, and a third player begins ; as they get home, that is, to *a*, they play at the ball by turns, until they all get out. Then, of course, the out-players take their places.

FIVES.

Fives may be played either single-handed or with partners. A good wall must be selected, with a round flat piece of ground in front of it. Three lines must be drawn so as to form, with the bottom of the wall, a square, to mark the bounds. A line must also be drawn on the wall, about three feet from the ground. The players toss up for innings. The winner begins by bounding his ball on the ground, and striking it against the wall, above the line, so that it may rebound vigorously. The other player then strikes it, in the same manner, either before it has touched the ground, or hopped from the ground more than once : the first



Playing Ball.

player then prepares to receive and strike it at its rebound ; and thus the game goes on, until one of the players fails to strike the ball in his turn, before it has hopped twice, or fails to strike it below the mark, or to drive it out of bounds. If the party who is in do neither of these, he loses his innings ; if the other, then the *in-player* reckons one, on each occasion, towards the game, which is fifteen.

NINE-HOLES, OR HAT-BALL.

Near a wall where the ground is level, dig nine, or a lesser number of holes, according to the number of players, large enough for a ball to be bowled in without difficulty. Number them, and let each player be allotted a number, by chance or choice, as it may be agreed. A line is drawn about five yards from the holes, at which one of the players places himself, and bowls the ball into one of the holes. The player to whom the hole, into which the ball is bowled, belongs, picks it up as quickly as he can, and endeavors to hit one

of the others with it. The latter all run off as soon as they perceive that the ball is not for themselves. If the thrower miss his aim, he loses a point, and is called 'a fifer,' and it is his turn to bowl. If, however, he hit another, he loses nothing; but the party hit, in case he succeeds in striking another with the ball, becomes 'a fifer,' and it is his turn to bowl. Five or six may be struck in succession, and the ball may be kept up, no matter how long, until a miss be made, when the party so missing loses a point and bowls. It is also allowed for one player to accept the ball from another, and run the risk of hitting a third. The second bowling is conducted precisely as the first; but he who bowls three times without passing the ball into the hole, loses a point, and if he have lost one before, becomes 'a tenner.' He must still go on, until he succeed in putting the ball into a hole; it is his own fault, if he bowl into that one, which belongs to himself. A party who misses his aim a second time becomes 'a ten-

ner;' he who loses a third time, 'a fifteener;' and when four points are lost the player stands out. The game goes on until all the players are out but one; who, of course, wins the game. One of the others then takes the ball in his left hand, places his face toward the wall, and throws the ball over the right shoulder as far as he can. The player who has won stands at the spot where the ball first touches the ground, or, if it be not immediately behind the party who has thrown it, a line is drawn from the place where the ball falls, to a spot directly behind the thrower. The winner then has the privilege of throwing the ball at the loser's back, three times, as soft as he pleases. The other losers throw in the same manner, one after another, and the winner has his three balls at each of their backs.

In some places this game is called 'Hat-ball,' on account of the players using their hats, instead of digging holes, and the ball is tossed into the hats, instead of being bowled into the holes.

CATCH-BALL.

This is somewhat similar to the preceding game. Instead of bowling the ball into holes, it is thrown in the air, and the name of the player, for whom it is intended, called out by the thrower. If it be caught, before it has twice touched the ground, by the player so called on, he loses no point, but throws it up again, and calls upon whom he pleases to catch it. If it be not caught in due time, he whose name is called must endeavor to strike one of the others with it ; if he miss, he loses a point, and has his throw up.

RACKETS.

In the game of rackets the ball is struck against a wall, and returned at the bound to the same wall, each player endeavoring so to strike it against the wall, with his bat, that his adversary may not be able to return it. He who does not return it, either

loses a point, or has his 'hand out,' that is to say, forfeits the situation in which he would be able to add to his score of the game. This sport requires considerable skill and activity in the player who must be constantly on the move. Standing still is entirely out of the question; and two or three games at rackets are well calculated to improve the health and invigorate the limbs.

CRICKET.

Cricket may be played by eleven persons on each side, though a less number is sufficient. Two umpires, or persons to decide, are sometimes appointed in order to settle all disputes that may arise: they are to take their stations at each wicket, and should be well acquainted with the laws of the game. Full-sized wickets are three stumps, sufficiently long to leave twenty-four inches out of the ground, with a bail, or cross stick, seven inches long, to fit the top. They should be placed directly opposite to each other, at the distance of

twenty-two yards for men, but varying according to the size of the player.

Bowling is an important part of the game, and requires great steadiness. Bad bowling is often the cause of losing a game. A bowler should not be too systematic, but vary his balls faster or slower, according to the peculiarities of the striker. He should aim directly at the opposite wicket.

The striker should always be ready for running, but he should be cautious, not to leave the ground before the ball is out of the bowler's hand ; for if he do, the bowler may put down his wicket, and he will, of course, be out. As soon as the ball is delivered, the striker may follow it, but should not run too far, so that, if no runs be obtained, he may return in time to save his wicket. The bat should be kept on the outside of the opposite partner, and care taken not to run against him.

The bowler should be careful to toss the ball in such a way, that the striker can play at it ; for if he should toss it above the striker's head, or out of the bounds, the party which is in shall be al-

lowed one notch, to be put down to the byes. The striker is out if the bail or cross stick be bowled off, or the stump be bowled out of the ground. Or, if in striking at the ball he hit down his wicket. Or, if he prevent the ball from being caught by the out-players. Or, if the ball be struck, and he wilfully strike it again. Or, if with any part of his person, he stop the ball, which might have hit his wicket. The following are among some of the remaining laws of cricket.

If the players have crossed each other, he that runs for the wicket which is put down, is out. When a ball is caught, no notch is reckoned. If the ball be struck, the striker may guard his wicket either with his bat or his body.

This is, I believe, the old and original method of playing cricket. It is often played in a simpler way. Two wickets are placed at some distance from each other. They consist each of two short stakes fixed in the ground, and a cross stick placed in notches, in the stakes, about the height of the ball from the ground. Two bowlers stand at each

wicket and roll the ball along the ground with the view of knocking off the cross stick. The striker endeavors to prevent this by hitting the ball with his bat ; but if he strike it so that it is caught by any of the other players, he is out.

FOOT-BALL.

A match is made between two sets of players of equal numbers ; a large ball made of light materials, — a blown bladder, cased with leather, is the best, — is placed between them, and the object of each party is to kick the ball across the goal of the other, and to prevent it from passing their own. The party, across whose goal the ball is kicked, loses the game. The game is commenced between the two goals, which are about a hundred yards asunder.

This game admits of very powerful exercise, and, when played with moderation, is healthful and lively. Country boys sometimes use a blown bladder, without the covering of leather, for a foot-

ball ; and they often put peas and horse-beans inside, which occasion a rattling as it is kicked about.



Playing at Cricket.

CHAPTER IV.

SPORTS OF SPEED.

IN running the legs should not be raised too high. The arms should be nearly still, so that no unnecessary opposition be given to the air by their motion. Your object should be rather to acquire a habit of running with ease, than to fatigue yourself by any violent effort. While talking of running, I am reminded of a story, which was once told me by a soldier of the revolution. I will tell it to you as he used to tell it to me, assuring you, at the same time, that it has its origin in fact : —
‘ I remember one occasion, on which my habit of speed served me a good turn. It was at the period of the revolution. I was quite a young man, but

devoted to the cause of my country. I had accepted the office of a spy. In time of war, this office is a very hazardous and responsible one. If the spy be caught by the enemy, he is usually hung with very little ceremony ; and I was not at all partial to being disposed of in that way.

Well : I had made myself acquainted with the position of the enemy and gained some important intelligence, when I set out to return to the American camp. It was a bright autumnal afternoon, and I was obliged to creep warily through the woods, to escape the vigilance of the British. I had travelled three or four miles, and began to think myself out of danger, when on turning round a narrow lane, I beheld an English officer and three soldiers beneath a tree.

My first movement was to sink down among the bushes, and try to conceal myself. But unfortunately one of the party beheld something stirring among the leaves, and supposing it to be some animal, he levelled his gun at the spot. His aim was directly at my head, and the unpleasant conviction

entered my mind, that unless I moved out of the way, I should be shot. I was also aware that if I discovered myself, I should be seized and executed as a spy.

‘I hit upon a desperate expedient. Starting from the ground, I rushed by the soldiers, knocking one of them over in my way, and trusted to an active pair of legs for my escape. Bang, bang, bang, bang, went the guns in my rear ; but I was soon out of the reach of a bullet. The officer and his men joined in a chase after me, and to do them justice, they were not slow in pursuit. I arrived at the top of a steep hill, wearied and out of breath ; but adopted an expeditious way of getting to the bottom. Laying myself on my back, I rolled down the high declivity, as you would roll a barrel along the ground.

‘On reaching the bottom, I staggered dizzily along to some distance, till I came to the bank of a river. I plunged in without hesitation, and the cool water seemed to revive me. When I had got ~~the~~ opposite side, the British were just prepar-

ing to ford the stream. I continued to run, and at the entrance of a small wood, was delighted by the sight of a company of Americans. I told them the cause of my haste, and informed them of the approach of my pursuers.

‘ You will probably conjecture the course, which was taken by my countrymen on hearing my story. They each concealed themselves behind a tree, and waited quietly for the approach of the British ; in a short time, my pursuers were seen emerging from the river, with their clothes wet and clinging heavily about them.

‘ It is needless to say that they were easily made prisoners by my companions. I returned safely to the American camp — made known my observations and adventures to the commanding officer, and rested sweetly and soundly that night, notwithstanding my roll down the hill, and my drenching in the river.’

I have wandered from my subject to tell you this story. Perhaps you may think that I am very communicative. But I have heard many curious stories

in the course of my life. I can enter upon few topics, which do not bring to my mind some scene in which I have been an actor, or some anecdote which I have heard from others. If you are tired of hearing me talk about myself, I will now tell you about other matters.

TOUCH, OR TAG.

This is a sport in which the swiftest runner usually comes off the best. Six or eight is the most convenient number to play at it. One volunteers to be the player, who is called Tag : it is the object of the other players to run from and avoid him. He pursues them all ; or, if he think fit, singles out an individual, whom he follows until he may touch him. The player so touched becomes Tag, and in his turn endeavors to lay his hand upon some one else. This is an active and amusing game for boys in cold weather. It is sometimes called Touch iron, or Touch wood ; in these cases, the players are safe from being touched, while their hands are upon iron or wood, as may be previously agreed.

PRISONER'S BASE.

This game may be played by five or nine on each side, and there is no objection to more or fewer players. The choice of partners is made by chance. Bounds are marked out for the two parties, a space being left between them to admit of running. Two *prisons* are also marked in a line with each other at some distance from the front of the bounds. The game is now commenced by a player from one side running out mid-way between the bounds and prisons ; a player from the other side immediately follows, and he may be pursued by one of his adversaries, who in like manner may be followed by a player from the side which began the game, and so on ; both parties being at liberty to send out as many as they think fit.

The object of each player is to come up with, or intercept and touch any player of the opposite side, who has left the bounds before him ; he is not at liberty to touch any that have started after

him, it being their privilege, on the contrary, if they can, to touch him before he can get back within his bounds again. A player is allowed to touch one of the opposite party only each time he quits bounds, and after having touched an adversary, he cannot be touched on his return to bounds. Every player who is touched, goes to the prison belonging to the opposite party, where he must remain until one of his own side be able to reach him, without being touched in his run from bounds to the prison, by any of the opposite party. When thus released, neither he nor the player who has freed him, is to touch or be touched in their return to bounds again. The game is won by that side which has all the players of the other in prison at the same time.

WARNING.

This may be played by any number, from ten to one hundred. One begins the game by repeating the following words, — ‘ Warning once, warning twice, warning three times over ; a bushel of wheat,

a bushel of rye, when the cock crows, out jump I ! — Cock-a-doodle-doo ! — Warning !' He then runs out, and touches the first he can overtake, who must return to bounds with him. These two then join hands, and each of them endeavors to touch another ; he also returns to bounds, and at the next sally joins hands with the other two. Every player who is afterwards touched by either of the outside ones, does the like, until the whole be thus touched and taken. It is not lawful to touch an out-player after the line is broken, either accidentally, or by the out-players attacking it, which they are permitted to do. When a player is touched, the line separates, and the out-players endeavor to catch those belonging to it, who are compelled to carry those who capture them, on their backs, to bounds. When three are touched, he who begins the game is entitled to join the out-players.

WHOOPE.

This game is played as follows : — All the players but one, collect at a place called 'home,' while one goes off to hide himself. When ready, he shouts 'Whoop oh !' The others then sally out to find him ; he who discovers the hidden player, calls out 'Whoop oh !' The hidden player then breaks from his concealment, and if he can catch one of the others, the one so caught must carry him on his back to 'home.' It is then the boy's turn who has made the discovery to go and hide himself, and the others endeavor to discover his lurking place, as before.

I SPY.

If I recollect aright, this game is played in the following manner : — A number of boys conceal themselves, and one or two, as may be agreed upon, sally forth in search of them. As soon as one of the finders catches a glimpse of any of the hiding

players, he exclaims 'I spy,' upon which all the boys run as fast as they can to goal. The boy who arrives at the goal last is then to go in search of the players, after they have again hid themselves.

DROPPING THE HANDKERCHIEF.

A number of players join hands so as to make a circle ; one only stands out ; he walks round the outside of the circle, and drops a handkerchief behind any player in the circle he chooses. The party, behind whom the handkerchief is thus dropped, immediately follows the one who dropped it. Those who stood on each side complete the circle by joining hands, and the chase commences. The pursuer is bound to follow precisely the course of the pursued, who winds in and out under the arms of the other players, and endeavors, by all the means in his power, to puzzle and elude him. If he succeed in so doing, and if the pursuer make a blunder in his course, he returns to his place in the circle, and the first player prepares to drop the

handkerchief behind one of the players again. When he is fairly overtaken by the player behind whom he has last dropped the handkerchief, the latter takes his place, and he joins hands in the circle.



CHAPTER V.

SPORTS OF AGILITY.

A BOY, who is quick and active out of doors, who is not seen lounging lazily in the sun, but who enters heartily into his sports, when the time and place are proper, may generally be looked upon as a good, or capable scholar. Habits of laziness and inactivity are to be carefully shunned by the young, lest in after life they reap their consequences in a feeble and sickly frame.

I once knew two brothers, of whom the eldest was named Arthur, and the youngest James. Arthur was a studious boy, but fond of the fireside, and averse to exercise in the open air. He was also very fond of lying in bed at morning, and

would not leave the house till it was time to go to school. James, though quite a respectable scholar, was the foremost in all sports during play-hours, and lost no opportunity of improving himself in strength and agility. He was always up at an early hour, and forth in the fields, or performing some useful labor in the yard.

Years passed on, and the boys grew in size, and in mind. At last they both entered college, but Arthur had not been there a week before he was obliged to leave on account of his health, and he has remained an invalid ever since, regretting deeply his early habits of bodily sloth and inactivity.

James passed through his course of study at the university in a creditable manner, and unimpeded by illness or want of strength. He has since become eminent as a lawyer, and I have often heard him declare, that wealth and reputation are nothing compared to the blessing of 'a sound mind in a sound body.'

I would, therefore, my young readers, enjoin it

upon you as a duty to avoid habits of inactivity and idleness. Rise with the lark, study while you study, and play while you play. Agility may be acquired by practice, but do not attempt feats, which have in them anything dangerous, for they are unnecessary, and without benefit. It is best to advance by degrees; you will find it the surest means of success. — I will now go on with my list of sports.

LEAP-FROG.

Leap-frog should be played in a smooth open place, and, if possible, out of doors. It is so common and simple a sport, that my description of it need be but brief. We will suppose a dozen boys at play:— Let eleven of them stand in a row, about six yards apart, and with their shoulders bent, and hands resting on their thighs. The last begins the sport by taking a short run, placing his hands on the shoulders of the nearest player, and leaping over his head. Having cleared the first, he goes on to the second, third, fourth, fifth, &c,

in succession, and as speedily as possible. When he has gone over the last, he goes to a proper distance, and places himself in a position for all the rest to leap over him in their turn. This is often a favorite sport with sailors at sea.

DUCK.

This game should be played by a number exceeding three, but not more than six or eight. A large stone with a smooth top is placed on the ground, and an offing, or goal, is marked at eight or ten yards distance. Each of the players being provided with a large pebble, one of them, by chance or choice, becomes duck ; that is, he places his pebble on the large stone, and stands a little on one side. The others then cast their pebbles or ducks at it, in turn, from the offing, each endeavoring to knock it off its place. Each player, as soon as he has cast his duck, watches for an opportunity of bringing it back to the offing, so as to cast again. If the player who is duck, can touch

him after he has taken up his pebble, and before he reaches the offing, provided his own pebble remain on the large stone, then the player so touched, becomes duck. It sometimes happens that three or four of the out-players' ducks lie close together, so that they all run the risk of being touched: in this case one of those who are at the offing can afford them an opportunity of getting their pebbles, by striking the duck off the large stone. The owner must replace it before he can touch any one.

JUMPING.

The first rule in jumping is to fall on the toes and never on the heels. Bend the knees, and swing the arms forward, when taking a spring, breaking the fall with the hands, if necessary. Hold the breath, keep the body forward, come to the ground with both feet together, and in taking the run, let your steps be short, and increase in quickness as you approach the leap. Begin with a moderate height or breadth, and increase both as you improve.

STEPPING THROUGH YOUR OWN FINGERS.

Get a bit of wood, or half of a tobacco-pipe, hold it between the two fore-fingers of each hand, and, without letting it go, after a little practice, you may leap over it, forward and backward without difficulty: when perfect in this, you may place the tops of the two middle fingers together, and leap over them both ways, without either separating or touching them with the feet.

THE PALM-SPRING.

This feat is performed by standing with your face toward a wall, and throwing yourself forward, until you support yourself from falling, by the palm of one of the hands being placed, with the fingers upward, against the wall; when in this position, you must recover your former erect station by springing from your hand, without bringing your feet forward. According to the greater or less distance you stand from the wall, the more or less difficult the

— * will be.

TWO TO ONE.

With the skipping-rope several difficult feats may be performed ; the best, perhaps, is the following : Skip in the common way for a few seconds, constantly increasing your velocity of movement, and, at length, leap tolerably high, and whirl the rope round so fast that it may pass twice under your feet before they touch the ground ; continue this until you can repeat it several times in succession, and, at last, pass the rope three times, instead of twice, under your feet during the leap.



TRIAL OF THE THUMB.

This feat is very simple. Place the inside of the thumb against the edge of a table, and then move your feet backward as far as you can from the table, so as to be able to recover your upright position by the spring of your thumb without moving your feet. You may accomplish this feat with much greater ease, if previously to springing from the thumb, you make two or three bends to and fro with your body. Neither the fingers, nor any part of the hand, except the thumb, should touch the table. It is advisable to begin by making the spring with your feet at a short distance only from the table at first, and to draw them farther from it gradually as you improve in the performance of the feat.

CHAPTER VI.

SPORTS OF SKILL.

I ONCE knew a sailor, who could stand on the tip-top of the mast of a vessel, and look around upon the water, without falling. This wonderful feat he learned by practice, to perform with the greatest ease.

A little boy who had seen him in this perilous position, undertook to do the same thing. He ascended the mast, placed his hand on the top, and glancing below to see that no one was looking, he gently raised his foot to the surface, and stood up erect, with his arms extended to balance him, and one leg in the air.

He soon became frightened, and dizzy. At that moment his father came on deck, and casting his eyes above, beheld the awful situation of his son. With great presence of mind, the father uttered no

exclamation, but seized a gun, and calling in a calm voice upon the daring little fellow, he ordered him to jump instantly into the sea, if he did not wish to be shot. This threat was necessary to prevent the boy's falling upon the deck, where he would have been unavoidably dashed to pieces. The little boy shut his eyes, and jumped. Down, down he went into the sea, and the water bubbled into his ears, and he thought that he should never be done sinking. Presently, however, he felt lighter. He began to ascend, and the next moment his head rose above the water light as a cork, and he felt the warm sunshine, and breathed the life-giving air. A boat had been hoisted out from the vessel, and he was drawn into it, somewhat drenched with the salt-water, but conscious of his escape. He was taken down into the cabin of the vessel, where his wet clothes were replaced by garments warm and dry, and he was soon as well as ever. His father, as you may suppose, looked to heaven with gratitude, for his son's preservation.

Why have I been going out of my way to tell you this story? Because I would impress on your

minds the danger of attempting any perilous feat, requiring strength or skill, before practice has given you a reasonable chance of success. Should a boy, unused to jumping, attempt to leap a wide ditch, he would probably alight in the middle of it, amongst the mire. But another boy, who had been accustomed to wandering through the meadows of the country, and clearing the ditches at a bound, would be successful in reaching the other side. It is his practice, which gives him the superiority — practice, which is the great secret of success in every thing.

ARCHERY.

Shooting with a bow is called archery, because the bow, when drawn, is in the shape of an arch. The bow is the oldest and most used of all weapons. In the days of king David, the use of the bow was general; and before that time, Israel, when blessing his sons, says of Joseph, ‘the *archers* have sorely grieved him, and shot at him and hated him; but his *bow* abode in strength, and the

arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.'

When Isaac sent Esau to the forest, he said, 'Take I pray thee, thy weapons, thy quiver, and thy bow, and go out to the field, and take me some venison.'

The North American Indians are very expert in the use of the bow, although now they kill most of their game with rifles.

The practice of shooting at targets with the bow and arrow used once to be very common in England. Boys should be careful in shooting their arrows, that no person is in the way. Accidents have occurred, where persons have been disfigured for life, or deprived of an eye, in consequence of a careless use of the bow and arrow. You recollect the story of king William, who was accidentally killed by Tyrrel in the forest of Sherwood. He was transfixed by an arrow. Equally familiar to you is the story of William Tell, who shot an apple from the head of his son, to save the lives of both.

In shooting, great care should be taken to ac-



quire a proper position, as represented in the cut. Bad attitudes in archery appear very ridiculous.

QUOITS.

The game of quoits is played with flat stones, which, if circular, are all the better for the purpose. The players have one, two, or three stones, as may be agreed, and upon the ground a mark is placed, at which they cast them. Those, whose quoits hit

of the hands, or moving the toes from the chalk line.

BATTLEDORE AND SHUTTLECOCK.

Battledores and shuttlecocks are to be had at most of the bookstores. The game is played by two persons, who, with the battledores, strike the



shuttlecock to and fro between them. The object is to keep the shuttlecock from falling to the ground as long as possible.

THE GRACES.

This is the name of a gentle in-doors sport, which is played by two persons, and is somewhat similar to battledore. Each of the players has two rods, with which he sends to the other a little hoop, which is kept going to and fro, until one fails to catch it on the point of his rod. Two hoops may be easily kept a-going, when the players have acquired a moderate degree of skill.

THE LONG REACH.

A line is to be marked on the floor, to which the toes of both your feet are to be brought, and beyond which they must not pass. You then kneel, and throw forward one of your hands (without touching the floor in its passage) so far that you can spring back again from the horizontal position to the upright position of the body. But in springing back, you must not disturb the posture

of the feet, or scrape the floor with the hand. The distance to which you can reach may be marked with a piece of chalk. Those who perform this trick the best, contrive, when on the stretch, that the body may rest upon the elbow.

THE TURN-OVER.

In performing this feat, you may take a run of half a dozen paces. The trick is to place the toe of the right foot against the wall, about the height of the knee from the ground, and to throw the left leg over it, making an entire revolution, so that when your left leg reaches the ground, your back will be to the wall. The toe of the right foot is the point upon which you must turn; and it must not quit the wall during the performance of the exploit. To perform the turn-over appears to be a matter of considerable difficulty, at the first glance of the description; but it may be attempted by a lad of tolerable activity, who has made himself master of the instructions, without danger,

and, in a short time, accomplished with facility. Ordinary care must, of course, be taken during the early attempts.

THE TANTALUS TRICK.

An amusing scene may be produced by requesting a person to stand with his back close against the wall, and, when in this position, placing a piece of money on the ground, a short distance before him, and offering it to him if he can pick it up without moving his heels from the wall. This, he will find, is impossible, as, on stooping forward, a part of the body goes back beyond the heels, which, in this case, the wall will, of course, prevent.

THE CATCH-CENT.

This is a trick, with which many of my young friends are probably familiar. Place two, three, or even four cent pieces, in a heap, on your elbow; drop your elbow suddenly, and bring your hand to

a little below where your elbow was, and you may catch them all.

STILTS.

There is a district in the south of France, called the Desert of Landes, where the shepherds walk on stilts, and so easily does *practice* enable them to preserve their balance, that they run, jump, stoop, and even dance, while mounted high from the ground. They use stilts to keep their feet out of the water, which, in winter, is deep on the sands; and to defend them from the heated sand during the summer. Another advantage is, that they can see to a much greater distance over the level soil, when they are elevated a few feet above their natural height.

They cannot, however, stand perfectly still upon their stilts, without the aid of a long staff, which they always carry in their hands; this guards them against any accidental trip, and when they wish to be at rest, forms a third leg that keeps them steady. The practice of walking on stilts is acquired

by these shepherds, when they are very young, and it is a curious fact, that the smaller the boy is, the higher are his stilts.

Stilts are easily constructed : two poles are procured, and at some distance from their ends, a loop of leather or rope is securely fastened ; in these the feet are placed, the poles are kept in a proper position by the hands, and put forward by the action of the legs. A superior mode of making stilts is by substituting a piece of wood, flat on the upper surface, for the leather loop.



CHAPTER VII.

GYMNASTICS.

THE word gymnastics has been so much in use of late years, that, I suppose all my young readers know what it means. Gymnastics may be said to be a series of regular exercises, calculated to strengthen the various muscles in the human frame. They also give a person knowledge of his actual strength, and when wisely practised, are highly beneficial to his health.

I am aware that some prejudice has been excited against gymnastic exercises, in consequence of the accidents which have occurred to boys, who practised them. Bruised limbs, broken arms, and dislocated necks, are said to be the unpleasant conse-

quences of attending a gymnasium. But the accidents which occur are rather a proof of the clumsiness or folly of those who meet with them, than of the uselessness of the exercises.

It has been said that gymnastics are not only worthless, but unnatural. Now, if it can be proved, that it is unnatural to climb a tree, to leap over a wide ditch when in danger, to mount on horseback with ease and grace, or to practise any exercise, which will impart vigor to the frame — I will then allow that gymnastics are unnatural.

I own it would be folly for savages, or for the North American Indians to set up a gymnasium ; for they already have one in their wide forests and broad rivers. But in cities or towns, where many persons have few opportunities to exercise their muscles ; where they are not obliged to go into the woods with bows and arrows to shoot game for their dinners ; where they do not paddle over the water in canoes to catch their fish — some artificial means are necessary to give them that exercise, of which their mode of life deprives them. So that instead

of being unnatural, gymnastics do in fact supply those practises, of which nature is often deprived, in civilized life.

The necessary fittings-up of a gymnastic ground are as follow : — a horizontal bar, a vaulting horse, a leaping-stand, and ladders of rope and wood. The best time for performing gymnastics is early in the morning. Boys should proceed gradually from the more easy to the difficult exercises ; and when heated, care should be taken not to catch cold by standing still in the open air.

The great mistake of persons, who attempt to practise gymnastics, is that they commence with violent efforts, and often hurt themselves by too great exertion. They should advance gradually, and every day, they will become stronger and stronger. Boys should not be rash in practising in a gymnasium. They should take short steps in their progress toward increasing their bodily strength and skill ; and they will find that, the facility with which they can perform these feats, will be greater at every step.



A Gymnasium.

PARALLEL BARS.

Two bars of wood are placed parallel at a few feet from the ground. A variety of exercise may be taken on this simple fixture.

Begin by raising the body by the hands, and then moving the hands alternately backward and forward, until you go along the bars each way by means only of your hands. Then move or jump with both hands at once. The swing is performed by supporting the body by the arms, with the stomach upward, until the toes are in a straight line with the head; when the pupil can do this with ease, he should throw his body from this position over the bar to the right or left. The movement of lowering the body by bending the elbows is done by drawing up the feet toward the hams, and sinking gradually until the elbows are even with the head; rise again by straightening the arms, and repeat the exercise several times. Many other exercises may be performed on these bars, which

will occur to the pupil in the course of his practice.

HORIZONTAL BAR.

The first position is taking hold of the bar with both hands, and raising the body until the chin is on a line with the knuckles. When you can look over the bar in this manner with ease, place the hands on the farther side of the bar from you, and raise the body as before. In the next exercise, the body is raised from the ground by both hands on each side of the bar, and the pupil passes, springs, or moves the hands alternately along the bar. Keep the legs close, lift the feet so as to touch the bar and sink them down again ; repeat this several times, and when in this position, pass along the bar by alternately moving the hands ; the body may then be supported by the right arm and left leg, and afterward by the left arm and right leg ; you may then place yourself in a riding position on the bar. You may also swing with the head downward, take

the bar with both hands, and pass the feet between them, until they hang downward.

VAULTING.

The horse for vaulting is made of a wooden cylinder with rounded ends ; two ridges are placed across it, the space between which is called the saddle : they should be wide enough apart for a person to sit between them with ease. The horse may be wadded or not, according to fancy. Leaping on the horse is performed by springing by the hands astride upon it. The body is raised in the same manner, until the feet reach high enough to stand on the horse ; the hands are then to be placed on the farther ridge, and the body thrown forward into the saddle.

THE ROPE.

In climbing the rope, the hands are to be moved alternately, one above the other, the feet drawn up

between every movement of the hands, and the rope grasped firmly between them; in descending, move one hand after the other, as the friction, if you slide, would blister them. The best method to climb the slant rope is to lay the sole of one foot flat on the rope, and the other leg over the instep of that foot.

THE PLANK, &c.

A plank is placed slantwise from the side of a wall, and the object is to climb it. By practice, you may learn to ascend, with ease, a plank placed in an almost perpendicular position.

There are various other exercises usual in gymnasiums, but I have not space to tell you all. If properly pursued, I believe these exercises to be highly useful and beneficial. Boys in town, however, have more need of them than those who live in the country.

CHAPTER VIII.

SWIMMING.

I HAVE a story to tell you about a sailor, who once fell overboard in the middle of the sea. His name was John Luff. He was one day painting the outer sides of the ship, when the rope, on which he was sitting, gave way, and dropped him into the water. The wind was fresh and strong, all the sails were set, and the vessel was going merrily over the blue waves.

As soon as John was missed, the sailors put about the ship, with the utmost haste. It was of little use. Poor John Luff was no where to be seen. His shipmates brushed away a few tears from their eyes, with their sleeves, again got the ship under way, and returned to their usual duties.

The day passed on, and the night came, and the sailors gave up all hopes of ever again seeing their old shipmate. The next day, it was very stormy. The waves rose high ; the wind roared, and the men were obliged to furl all the sails of the ship.

On the third day after John's accident, the weather was calm and delightful. The sun shone with dazzling brilliancy upon the smooth waters. The ship swung lazily on the sea, and though all its canvass was spread to the wind, it moved not forward. The sailors were employed in different ways. Some were greasing the mast, and others were mending the sails, and others were occupied in coiling the ropes.

Suddenly, the man at the helm heard a voice exclaim, ' Holloa, there — why can't you take me in ? Do you expect me to swim all the way to Matanzas ? Throw me a rope, will you ?'

In amazement, the man approached the stern, and looking over, beheld his lost shipmate swimming like a porpoise in the wake of the vessel. The captain was called ; and all the crew on look-

ing overboard were mute with astonishment. A boat was soon lowered, and John was taken in, apparently in good health and strong, but with his clothes soaked with water. He jumped on deck, shook hands with his shipmates, and went forward to change his clothes.

Now do you suppose that John actually swam after the vessel during the three days that he was missing? Not he, indeed. He had hardly fallen overboard when he caught hold of a rope, which he saw hanging over the stern, and by its help climbed safely into the cabin window. No person was in the cabin, and John, after emptying a bottle of wine, which stood on the table, and devouring a quantity of bread and cheese, slunk slyly away to a place between the decks, where he lay down upon a bag of meal, and went to sleep.

When he awoke the next morning, it was with some difficulty that he could recollect his situation. As soon as he was fully conscious of this, he decided that he would remain where he was for that day ;

and as there were provisions enough near, there was no danger of his starving.

The next day, when no one was in the cabin, he entered it, and after tasting some more of the captain's wine, he went to the cabin window, and dove into the water. He then uttered the exclamation, which so startled the man at the helm, and he was afterwards taken into the ship.

After this exploit, which certainly was not a remarkably honest one, John was highly renowned as a swimmer. When the vessel arrived at Matanzas, in Cuba, the captain mentioned to a Spanish merchant, that he had among his crew a sailor, who could beat any man in swimming. 'I have a negro, who will beat him,' said the Spaniard. The result of the conversation was, that a time and place were appointed for the two swimmers to meet, and decide which was the best.

On the day appointed, the negro came down to the shore, prepared to jump into the water. By and by, John was seen approaching the spot, bearing on his shoulders a long board, which held three

or four baskets full of provisions. The negro asked him what use he intended to make of the board. 'Whorra, Sambo,' replied John, 'we must not go to sea, without something to eat, on our way.'

'And for how long a journey have you made preparations?' asked the Spaniard.

'Why, if we have good weather, we may get back by to-morrow night.'

The negro did not at all relish the idea of being so long in the water. He grew frightened, and at last flatly refused to swim with our hero. So that John was a second time successful in passing himself off for a great swimmer.

But knavery must always be found out at last. John's tricks were finally discovered, and he proved to be no better a swimmer than his messmates. We will now bid him good bye.

FACULTY OF SWIMMING.

It is said, that any person might swim, were he not hindered by fear. Confidence is the great

secret of the art. There are a few rules, however, which may be of advantage to the learner.

In addition to its advantages as a healthy and bracing exercise, humanity alone, the pleasure of being not only able to preserve our own lives, but those of others, ought to be a sufficient inducement to acquire a knowledge of the art.

DOCTOR FRANKLIN'S REMARKS ON SWIMMING.

‘The exercise of swimming is one of the most healthy and agreeable in the world. — But you will be no swimmer till you can place confidence in the power of the water to support you ; I would, therefore, advise the acquiring that confidence in the first place ; especially as I have known several, who, by a little practice necessary for that purpose, have insensibly acquired the stroke, taught as if it were by nature. The practice I mean is this : choosing a place where the water deepens gradually, walk coolly into it till it is up to your breast ; then turn round your face to the

shore, and throw an egg into the water between you and the shore ; it will sink to the bottom, and be easily seen there if the water be clean. It must lie in the water so deep that you cannot reach to take it up but by diving for it.

‘ To encourage yourself, in order to do this, reflect that your progress will be from deep to shallow water, and that at any time you may, by bringing your legs under you, and standing on the bottom, raise your head far above the water ; then plunge under it with your eyes open, which must be kept open before going under, as you cannot open the eyelids for the weight of water above you ; throwing yourself toward the egg, and endeavoring, by the action of your hands and feet against the water, to get forward, till within reach of it. In this attempt you will find that the water buoys you up against your inclination ; that it is not so easy to sink as you imagine, and that you cannot, but by active force get down to the egg. Thus you feel the power of water to support you, and learn to confide in that power, while your endeavors to

overcome it, and reach the egg, teach you the manner of acting on the water with your feet and hands, which action is afterwards used in swimming to support your head higher above the water, or to go forward through it.

‘When a swimmer is seized with the cramp in the leg, the method of driving it away is, to give the parts affected a sudden, vigorous, and violent shock, which he may do in the air, as he swims on his back.

‘When I was a boy, I amused myself one day with flying a paper kite ; and approaching the banks of a lake, which was near a mile broad, I tied the string to a stake, and the kite ascended to a very considerable height above the pond, while I was swimming. In a little time, being desirous of amusing myself with my kite, and enjoying at the same time the pleasure of swimming, I returned, and loosing from the stake the string with the little stick which was fastened to it, went again into the water, where I found that, lying on my back, and holding the stick in my hand, I was drawn along

the surface of the water in a very agreeable manner.

‘ Having then engaged another boy to carry my clothes round the pond, to a place which I pointed out to him, on the other side, I began to cross the pond with my kite, which carried me quite over without the least fatigue, and with the greatest pleasure imaginable. I was only obliged occasionally to halt a little in my course, and resist its progress, when it appeared that, by following too quick, I lowered the kite too much; by doing which occasionally I made it rise again. I have never since that time practised this singular mode of swimming, though I think it not impossible to cross, in this manner, from Dover to Calais. The packet-boat, however, is still preferable.’

THE PLANK, AND OTHER AIDS.

A plank is useful in a bath to perfect the young swimmer in the manner of properly throwing out his legs and feet. A rope fastened to a beam over

head is often a great assistance. A rope may also be fastened about the learner's body, while a grown person holds the other end of it, and keeps him above the water.

The use of corks and bladders to buoy the learner up, is recommended by some, but I would not advise you to employ them. If the corks should slip down your body, your head would take the place of your feet in the water, and you would run a great risk of being drowned.

DIVING.

Diving, by practice, may be carried to astonishing perfection. Pearls are brought up from the bottom of the sea by divers, who are trained to remain a considerable time under water. In ancient times, divers were employed in war to destroy the ships of the enemy; and many instances are related, by respectable authors, of men diving after, and fetching up nails and pieces of money thrown

into the sea, and even overtaking the nail or coin before it has reached the bottom.

Diving may be performed from the surface of the water when swimming, by merely turning the head downward, and striking upward with the legs. It is, however, much better to leap in, with the hands closed above the head, and head foremost, from a pier, boat, or raised bank. By merely striking with the feet, and keeping his head toward the bottom, the diver may drive himself a considerable distance beneath the surface. In diving, the eyes should be open ; the breath should be held.

TO TREAD WATER.

All that is necessary for treading water, is to let your legs drop in the water until you are upright ; then keep yourself afloat in that position by treading downward with your feet, alternately ; and, if necessary, paddling with your palms at your hips.

PRECAUTIONS.

Never venture into the water when you are over-heated, or when you are perfectly cool. It is best to take a little exercise before going in. It is injurious to remain in cold water long. Three or four minutes at a time are sufficient. Do not venture beyond your depth, unless you are sure that you can swim, but if you should get beyond your depth, be not flurried or frightened. Some means of sustaining yourself above water will often come natural to you until assistance may arrive.

With regard to the proper time of the day for swimming, there are different opinions. One thing is certain : it is injurious to bathe immediately after meals. Noon is perhaps as good a time as any, at which to bathe.

In entering the water, the head should be wetted first, either by plunging in head foremost, or pouring water on it. Before you adopt the first method, ascertain if the water be sufficiently deep

to allow you to dive without touching the bottom, otherwise you may injure yourself against it. Do not remain in the water too long, but come out as soon as you feel tired, chilly, or numbed. It is a good plan to make a plunge, so as to wet the body all over, to return to shore immediately, and an instant afterward enter the water at your ease, and take your lesson or your swim. You do not feel so chilly if you do this, as if you dash in and swim off at once. Never be alarmed at having a few mouthfuls of water, when learning to swim; be not discouraged at difficulties, but bear in mind, that millions have done what you are attempting to do. Beware of banks which have holes in them, and venture out of your depth only by degrees.

If one of your companions be in danger of drowning, be sure that, in endeavoring to save him, you make your approaches in such a manner, as will prevent him from grappling with you; if he once get a hold of your limbs, you both will almost inevitably be lost.

It has been said, that he who wishes to learn the art of swimming, cannot have a better model than the frog.





Skating and Coasting.

SLIDING.

Sliding on the ice is an amusement, in which my young friends need no instruction. I recollect perfectly well the bruises, which I used to receive in my persevering efforts to make my way by this method, over the ice. And how I used to ponder over the affecting, but somewhat incredible story contained in Mother Goose's Melodies — almost the only book for children, when I was young! You will excuse me for repeating the story here : —

‘ Three children, sliding on the ice,
Upon a summer day,
As it fell out, they all fell in,
The rest they ran away !’

COASTING.

Coasting is a name, which has been given by American boys to the amusement of sliding down hill on little wooden sleds. When the ground is covered with snow, a boy goes to the top of a hill with his sled, upon which he places himself, and then pushing gently at first with his feet, away he

glides down the declivity, nor stops till he reaches the bottom. The snow may drift in his face, but on he glides, and thinks it capital fun. In Russia, in places where there are few natural hills, artificial hills are constructed for the boys, who are very fond of this exercise.

SNOW-BALLING.

Snow-balling is another amusement, of which my readers will not probably require a description. I would only caution my young friends, that should they ever practice this sport, they must make use of nothing harder than light snow. It is cruel and unnecessary to throw pieces of ice at your play-fellows.

The following amusing account of a skirmish in the snow is by a spirited writer ; and if you have read the extract before, you may find it worth reading again : —

‘ It had gently but steadily snowed all one December night, and almost all the next day. Owing to the weather, there were no girls excepting Captain Clark’s two, and no very small boys at school. The scholars had been unusually playful through

the day, and had taken liberties which would not have been tolerated in the full school.

‘When we were dismissed at night, the snow had done falling, and the ammunition of just the right moisture, lay in exhaustless abundance on the ground, all as level as a floor, for there had been no wind to distribute unequally the gifts of the impartial clouds. The first boy that sprang from the threshold caught up a quart of the spotless but viscid material, and whitewashed the face of the next one at the door, who happened to belong to the rival side. This was a signal for general action.

‘As fast as the troops poured out, they rushed to the conflict. We had not the coolness deliberately to arrange ourselves in battle order, line against line, but each aimed at each as he could, no matter whom, how, or where, provided that he belonged to the “other end.” We did not round the snow into shape, but hurled and dashed it in large masses, as we happened to snatch or scoop it up.



Snow-Balling.

‘At length, from putting snow into each other, we took to putting each other into the snow. Not by the formal and deliberate wrestle, but pell-mell, hurly-burly, as foot, hand, or head could find an advantage. The combatants were covered with the clinging element. It was as if their woollen habiliments had turned back to their original white. So completely were we all besmeared by the same material, that we could not tell friend from foe in the blind encounter. No matter for this ; we were now crazed with fun ; and we were ready to carry it to the utmost extent that time, and space, and snow would admit.

‘Just opposite the school house door, the hill descended very steeply from the road for about ten rods. The stone wall just here was quite low, and completely covered with snow even before this last fall. The two stoutest champions of the fray had been snowing it into each other like storm-spirits from the two opposite poles. At length, as if their snow-bolts were exhausted, they seized each other for the tug of muscle with muscle.

‘ They had unconsciously worked themselves to the precipitous brink. Another stout fellow caught a glimpse of their position, gave a rush and a push, and both Arctic and Antarctic went tumbling heels hindmost down the steep declivity, until they were stopped by the new fallen snow in which they were completely buried ; and one with his nose downward, as if he had voluntarily dived into his own grave.

‘ This was a signal for a general push-off, and the performer of the sudden exploit was the first to be gathered to his victims below. In five minutes all were in the same predicament but one, who, not finding himself attacked, wiped the plaster from his eyes, and saw himself the lone victor of the field. He gave a victorious shout, then not liking solitude for a playmate, he made a dauntless leap after the rest, who were now quickly rising from their snowy burial to life, action and fun anew.’

THE SNOW STATUE.

When there is a considerable quantity of snow upon the ground, it is often the custom with boys to construct huts or caves of the pliable material. The little snow-ball may also be rolled along the ground until it accumulates to a vast size, and is too heavy to move.

- 'The snow! the snow! — alas! to me
It speaks of far-off days,
When a boyish skater, mingling free
Amid the merry maze:
Methinks I see the broad ice still;
And my nerves all jangling feel,
Blending with tones of voices shrill
The ring of the slider's heel.
- 'The snow! the snow! — I see him yet,
That piled-up giant grim,
'To startle horse and traveller set,
With Titan girth of limb.

We hoped, oh ice-ribb'd Winter bright !
Thy sceptre could have screen'd him ;
But traitor Thaw stole forth by night,
And cruelly guillotined him !

' The snow ! the snow ! It brings to mind
A thousand happy things,
And but one sad one — 'tis to find,
Too sure that time has wings !
Oh ! ever sweet is sight or sound,
That tells of long ago ;
And I gaze around, with thoughts profound,
Upon the falling snow.'

CHAPTER X.

OPTICAL AMUSEMENTS.

I WILL now tell you something about those amusements, which are enjoyed solely by the aid of the eye. Optical is a word derived from the Greek, and means, 'relating to the sight or vision.' The science of optics affords a great variety of curious experiments, which are instructive as well as entertaining. By studying this science, men have been able to explain appearances, which when they happened many years ago, would frighten the ignorant and superstitious.

It has been proved, that a diseased state of the eye may cause a person to see, with perfect distinctness, things, which in fact, are mere delusions.

Many of the foolish old stories about ghosts and apparitions may be reasonably accounted for in this way. A celebrated writer, Dr Brewster, tells a story, which, I think, you will find interesting.

‘About ten o’clock at night, when Mr and Mrs A. were sitting in the drawing-room, Mr A. took up the poker to stir the fire, and when he was in the act of doing this, Mrs A. exclaimed, “Why there’s the cat in the room!” — “Where?” asked Mr A. — “There, close to you,” she replied. — “Where?” he repeated. — “Why, on the rug, to be sure.”

‘Mr A., who had still the poker in his hand, pushed it in the direction mentioned. — “Take care,” cried Mrs A., “take care, you are hitting her with the poker.” Mr A. again asked her to point out exactly where she saw the cat. She replied, “Why sitting up there close to your feet on the rug: she is looking at me. It is Kitty — Come here, Kitty.” — There were two cats in the house, one of which went by this name, and they were rarely if ever in the drawing-room. At this

time Mrs A. had no idea that the sight of the cat was an illusion.

‘When she was asked to touch it, she got up for the purpose, and seemed as if she were pursuing something which moved away. She followed a few steps, and then said, “It has gone under the chair.” Mr A. assured her it was an illusion, but she would not believe it. He then lifted up the chair, and Mrs A. saw nothing more of it. The room was then searched all over, and nothing found in it.

‘There was a dog lying on the hearth, who would have betrayed great uneasiness if a cat had been in the room, but he lay perfectly quiet. In order to be quite certain, Mr A. rung the bell, and sent for the two cats, both of which were found in the housekeeper’s room.’

These curious illusions cannot perhaps, be fully explained ; but probably ‘they are pictures in the *mind’s eye*, more vivid than the pictures in the body’s eye.’ I will now tell you of a few of those

experiments and amusements, which the science of optics presents.

THE INVISIBLE WAFER.

There are few persons aware that when they look with one eye, there is some particular object before them to which they are absolutely blind. In order to be convinced of this curious fact, place two colored wafers upon a sheet of white paper at the distance of three inches, and look at the left hand wafer with the right eye, at the distance of about eleven or twelve inches, taking care to keep the eye straight above the wafer. When this is done, and the left eye closed, the right hand wafer will no longer be visible.

THE THAUMATROPE.

It was found by a French philosopher, that the impression of light continued on the retina, or

optic nerve, which is situated on the back part of the eye, about the eighth part of a second, after the image is removed. Thus, if a stick, lighted at the end, be made to revolve, so as to complete a circle in that short period, we shall see not a fiery point, but a fiery circle; because the impression made by it in every point of its circuit will remain until it comes round again to the spot, from which it set out.

On this principle, the *Thaumatrope* is constructed.

This very amusing toy is made and exhibited in the following manner: Cut out a circular piece of card, to which fasten six bits of string. Draw on one side of it a figure with balls, and on the other, two balls only; then taking one of the strings between the forefinger and thumb of each hand, close to the card, twist or twirl it rapidly round, and according to which pair of strings you use, the figure will seem to be tossing two, three, or four balls in different directions. Various cards and devices may be used: for instance, you may

draw a bird on one side, and a cage on the other ; a horse on one side, and a jockey on the other, (taking care to reverse the figures, or draw them upside down to each other,) and by using the different pairs of strings, you may cause the rider to appear upon, leaping under, or by the side of the horse, as you please.

THE CAMERA OBSCURA.

The camera obscura is an instrument, by which the outline of a prospect may be shadowed forth in a manner so clear, that it may be transferred to paper. It is usually constructed in a box, of about a foot and a half square. You may also construct the camera obscura in a room, thus : — you first darken the room, by closing the shutters, and every place where the external light can be admitted. You then cut a circular hole in the shutter, or a board placed against the window, in which you place a lens, or convex-glass, the focus of which is at the distance of not less than four, nor more than

fifteen or twenty feet : from six to twelve feet is the best distance. At this distance, also, place a pasteboard, covered with the whitest paper, with a black border, to prevent any of the side rays from disturbing the picture ; let it be two feet and a half long, and eighteen or twenty inches high ; bend the length of it inward, to the form of part of a circle, the diameter of which is equal to double the focal distance of the glass : then fix it on a frame of the same figure, and place it upon a moveable foot, that it may be easily fixed at that exact distance from the glass where the objects paint themselves to the greatest perfection. When it is thus placed, all the objects, which are in the front of the window, will be painted upon the paper, in an inverted position, with the greatest regularity, and in the most natural colors.

THE MAGIC LANTERN.

The object of this ingenious instrument is to represent, in a dark room, on a white wall or cloth,

a succession of enlarged figures of remarkable, natural, or grotesque objects. The representations are often quite amusing. A smith, for example, is made to hammer on his anvil, — and a tempest at sea is represented, with ships tossing on the water. It requires some ingenuity to construct one of these instruments, and you can best learn to do this by taking one already completed, as a model.

CHAPTER XI.

CHEMICAL AMUSEMENTS.

THE science of chemistry is one of the most curious and important, to which the attention of man can be devoted. Its powers are great, and to an ignorant person, truly wonderful. Before describing to you some of the amusements, which it affords, I would caution you against attempting any of those, which can be productive of mischief.

SYMPATHETIC INKS.

Sympathetic inks are certain liquors, which alone, and in their natural state, are colorless ; but which,

by being mixed with each other, or by some particular circumstance, assume a certain color.

Chemistry presents us with a great many liquors of this kind, the most curious of which we shall here describe.

1. If you write with a solution of green vitriol, to which a little acid has been added, the writing will be perfectly colorless and invisible. To render it visible, nothing will be necessary but to immerse the paper in an infusion of gall-nuts in water, or to draw a sponge moistened with the infusion over it.

2. Write with a weak solution of alum in lemon-juice, and the characters will remain invisible until wetted with water, which renders them of a greyish color, and quite transparent.

3. Write with a diluted solution of muriate or nitrate of cobalt, and the writing will be invisible ; but, upon being held to the fire, it will appear perfectly distinct, and of a blue color : if the cobalt should be adulterated with iron, the writing will appear of a green color. When taken from

the fire the writing will soon disappear. If a landscape be drawn, and all finished with common colors, except the leaves of the trees, the grass and the sky, and the latter be finished with this sympathetic ink, and the two former with the adulterated solution just mentioned, the drawing will seem to be unfinished, and have a wintry appearance ; but, upon being held to the fire, the grass and trees will become green, the sky blue, and the whole assume a rich and beautiful appearance.

HEAT AND COLD.

Take one ounce of muriate of ammonia, the same quantity of nitrate of potash, (saltpetre,) and two ounces of sulphate of soda ; reduce these salts separately into powder, and mix them gradually with four ounces of water ; the result will be, that as the salts dissolve, cold will be produced. A thermometer, immersed in the mixture, will sink at or below the freezing point. If a test tube be

filled with water, and immersed in the mixture, the water will soon be frozen.

The above mixture is sometimes used at the tables of the rich, to cool the wine, when ice cannot be procured.

FREEZING MIXTURE.

The most powerful of all freezing mixtures is a mixture of muriate of lime and snow : to produce the greatest effect by this mixture, equal weights of the salt, finely powdered, and newly-fallen snow, must be quickly mixed together. This is the mixture that is employed to freeze quicksilver.

COMBUSTION AND EXPLOSION.

1. — Put a small quantity of calcined or pure magnesia into a cup, and pour over it a sufficient quantity of sulphuric acid to cover it ; almost immediately combustion will commence, and sparks will be thrown out in all directions.

2. — Rub a few grains of chlorate of potash, and about half the quantity of sulphur, together in a mortar, and a cracking detonation will be produced, accompanied with flashes of light. If a small quantity of the same mixture be wrapped in paper, laid upon an anvil, and smartly struck with a hammer, a report will be produced, which will be loud in proportion to the quantity used.

3. Hold the end of a rod of glass to a grind-stone while it is revolving ; in a very short time it will become so hot, that phosphorus and other combustible bodies may be inflamed by it. I must caution my young readers, however, against trying this experiment with gun-powder. — Wood rubbed against wood will also produce great heat. The natives of New Holland light their fires by this means.

THE CANDLE INVISIBLY EXTINGUISHED.

Place a lighted candle in the bottom of a jar which has its open part uppermost, (the jar being

filled with atmospheric or common air,) then take a jar filled with carbonic acid gas, and invert it over the jar in which the candle is placed; the effect is very striking; the invisible fluid, being heavier than atmospheric air, descends like water, and extinguishes the flame. The whole, to spectators who have no idea of substance without sensible matter, has the appearance of magic.

TO MAKE GAS.

Put a little coal into the bowl of a common tobacco-pipe, stop the mouth of it up with clay, and place the bowl in a fire; as soon as the coal becomes heated, a small stream of gas will issue from the top of the pipe. If a candle is put to it, the gas will take fire, and burn for some time.

A LIQUID PRODUCED FROM TWO SOLIDS.

Mix equal portions of sulphate of soda and acetate of lead, both in fine powder: let them be well

rubbed together in a mortar, when the two solids will operate upon each other, and a fluid will be produced.

A SOLID PRODUCED FROM TWO LIQUIDS.

If a saturated solution of muriate of lime be mixed with a saturated solution of carbonate of potash, (both transparent liquids,) the result is the formation of an opaque and almost solid mass. If a little nitric acid be added to the product, the solid mass will be changed to a transparent fluid.

These two last experiments were formerly called chemical miracles, but the present scientific age no longer considers them so; it being now well ascertained that the changes which take place are occasioned by chemical decomposition, or the action of one salt upon another.

CHAPTER XII.

ARITHMETICAL AMUSEMENTS.

THERE are many curious questions in arithmetic, which afford good exercise for the mind as well as considerable amusement. They furnish subjects for quiet in-door pastime, and may be acceptable at times, when the weather or some other circumstance prevents you from playing in the open air.

TO TELL ANY NUMBER THOUGHT OF.

Bid the person take 1 from the number thought of, and then double the remainder; desire him to take 1 from this double, and to add to it the number thought of; in the last place, ask him the

number arising from this addition, and, if you add 3 to it, the third of the sum will be the number thought of.

ANOTHER METHOD.

Desire the person to add 1 to the triple of the number thought of, and to multiply the sum by 3 ; then bid him add to this product the number thought of, and the result will be a sum, from which if 3 be subtracted, the remainder will be ten times of the number required ; and if the cipher on the right be cut off from the remainder, the other figure will indicate the number sought.

Example : — Let the number thought of be 6, the triple of which is 18 ; and if 1 be added, it makes 19 ; the triple of this last number is 57, and if 6 be added, it makes 63, from which if 3 be subtracted, the remainder will be 60 : now, if the cipher on the right be cut off, the remaining figure, 6, will be the number required.

THE GAME OF THE RING.

This game is an application of one of the methods employed to tell several numbers thought of, and ought to be performed in a company not exceeding nine, in order that it may not be too difficult. Desire any one of the company to take a ring, and put it on any joint of whatever finger he may think proper. The question then is, to tell what person has the ring, and on what hand, what finger, and on what joint.

For this purpose, you must call the first person 1, the second 2, the third 3, and so on. You must also denote the ten fingers of the two hands, by the following numbers of the natural progression, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, &c, beginning at the thumb of the right hand, and ending at that of the left, that by this the order of the number of the finger may, at the same time, indicate the hand. In the last place, the joints must be denoted by 1, 2, 3, beginning at the points of the fingers.

To render the solution of this problem more explicit, let us suppose that the fourth person in the company has the ring on the sixth finger, that is to say, on the little finger of the left hand, and on the second joint of that finger.

Desire some one to double the number expressing the person, which, in this case, will give 8; bid him add 5 to this double, and multiply the sum by 5, which will make 65; then tell him to add to this product the number denoting the finger, that is to say, 6, by which means you will have 71; and, in the last place, desire him to multiply the last number by 10, and to add to the product the number of the joint, 2; the last result will be 712; if from this number you deduct 250, the remainder will be 462; the first figure of which, on the left, will denote the person; the next, the finger, and consequently, the hand; and the last, the joint.

It must here be observed, that when the last result contains a cipher, which would have happened in the present example, had the number of the

finger been 10, you must privately subtract from the figure preceding the cipher, and assign the value of 10 to the cipher itself.

THE SOVEREIGN AND THE SAGE.

A sovereign being desirous to confer a liberal reward on one of his courtiers, who had performed some very important service, desired him to ask whatever he thought proper, assuring him it should be granted. The courtier, who was well acquainted with the science of numbers, only requested that the monarch would give him a quantity of wheat equal to that which would arise from one grain doubled sixty-three times successively. The value of the reward was immense; for it will be found, by calculation, that the sixty-fourth term of the double progression divided by 1 : 2 : 4 : 8 : 16 : 32 : &c, is 9223372036854775808. But the sum of all the terms of a double progression, beginning with 1, may be obtained by doubling the last term and subtracting from it 1. The number

of the grains of wheat, therefore, in the present case, will be 18446744073709551615. Now, if a pint contain 9216 grains of wheat, a gallon will contain 73728 ; and, as eight gallons make one bushel, if we divide the above result by eight times 73728, we shall have 31274997411295 for the number of the bushels of wheat equal to the above number of grains : a quantity greater than what the whole surface of the earth could produce in several years, and which, in value, would exceed all the riches, perhaps, on the globe.

THE OLD MAN AND HIS RACE-HORSE.

A gentleman, taking a fancy to a horse, which an old horse dealer wished to dispose of at as high a price as he could ; the latter, to induce the gentleman to become a purchaser, offered to let him have the horse for the value of the twenty-fourth nail in his shoes, reckoning one farthing for the first nail, two for the second, four for the third, and so on to the twenty-fourth. The gentleman, thinking he should

have a good bargain, accepted the offer ; the price of the horse was, therefore, necessarily great.



The old Man and his race-Horse.

By calculating as before, the twenty-fourth term of the progression, $1 : 2 : 4 : 8 : \&c$, will be found to be 8388608, equal to the number of farthings the purchaser gave for the horse ; the price, therefore, amounted to 8738*l*, 2*s*, 8*d*.

THE DINNER PARTY.

A club of seven persons agreed to dine together every day successively, as long as they could sit down to table differently arranged. How many dinners would be necessary for that purpose? It may be easily found, by the rules already given, that the club must dine together 5040 times, before they would exhaust all the arrangements possible, which would require above thirteen years.

QUAINT-QUERY.

What is the difference between six dozen dozen, and half a dozen dozen?

Answer. — 792 : — Six dozen dozen being 864, and half a dozen dozen, 72.

CHAPTER XIII.

LEGERDEMAIN.

LEGERDEMAIN, or sleight of hand, is the art of performing a variety of tricks, which, to a person unacquainted with them, seem truly curious and astonishing. I am not particularly partial to these kinds of sports, but it is well enough to know how they are performed, so that one need not be betrayed into thinking that wonderful, which is very simple. I am indebted to the 'Boy's Own Book' for the following 'tricks of easy performance.'

THE CONJUROR'S JOKE.

Take a ball in each hand, and stretch your hands as far as you can, one from the other; then state

that you will contrive to make both the balls come into either hand, without bringing the hands near each other. If any one dispute your power of doing this, you have no more to do, than to lay one ball down upon the table, turn yourself, and take it up with your other hand. Thus both the balls will be in one of your hands, without their approaching each other.

TO LIGHT A CANDLE BY SMOKE.

When a candle is burnt so long as to leave a tolerably large wick, blow it out ; a dense smoke, which is composed of hydrogen and carbon, will immediately arise. Then, if another candle, or lighted taper, be applied to the utmost verge of this smoke, a very strange phenomenon will take place ; the flame of the lighted candle will be conveyed to that just blown out, as if it were borne on a cloud, or, rather, it will seem like a mimic flash of lightning proceeding at a slow rate.

TO SUSPEND A RING BY A BURNT THREAD.

The thread having been previously soaked two or three times in common salt and water, tie it to a ring for the finger. When you apply the flame of a candle to it, though the thread burn to ashes, it will yet sustain the ring.

THE BALANCED STICK.

Procure a piece of wood about the length of your hand, half an inch thick, and twice as broad ; within a short distance of one end of this piece, thrust in the points of the blades of two penknives of equal weight, in such a manner, that one of them may incline to one side, the second to the other. If its other extremity be placed on the tip of the finger, the stick will keep itself upright without falling ; and if it be made to incline, it will raise itself again and recover its former situation.

THE DOUBLED COIN.

Half fill a glass of water, and put a shilling or a sixpence into it ; cover the glass with a plate, upon which, place one hand, while you hold the glass with the other ; turn the glass upside down, so that none of the water may escape ; place it on a table, and you will see the coin, at the bottom, larger than it is in reality, and another will appear, of the natural size, a little above it.

THE INCOMBUSTIBLE THREAD.

Wind some linen thread tightly round a smooth pebble, secure the end, and if you expose it to the flame of a lamp or candle it will not burn. The caloric traverses, without fixing in it, and only attacks the stone which it encases. To a person who has never seen this experiment tried, it is quite interesting and extraordinary.

THE FADED ROSE RESTORED.

Take a rose that is quite faded, and throw some sulphur on a chafing-dish of hot coals, then hold the rose over the fumes of the sulphur, and it will become quite white ; in this state dip it into water, put it into a box or drawer for three or four hours, and when taken out, it will be quite red again.

INCOMBUSTIBLE PAPER.

Dip a sheet of paper in strong alum-water, and when dry, repeat the process ; or, it will be better still, if you dip and dry it a third time. After this, you may put it in the flame of a candle, and it will not burn.

THE SIMPLE DECEPTION.

Stick a little wax upon your thumb, take a bystander by the fingers, show him a sixpence, and

tell him you will put the same into his hand ; then wring it down hard with your waxed thumb, and, using many words, look him in the face ; suddenly take away your thumb, and the coin will adhere to it ; then close his hand, it will seem to him that the sixpence remains ; now tell him to open his hand, and, if you perform the feat cleverly, to his great astonishment, he will find nothing in it.

THE WONDERFUL WAFERS.

On each side of a table-knife, place, in the presence of your company, three wafers : small pieces of paper will do as well. Take the knife by the handle, and turn it over two or three times, to show that the wafers are all on. Desire some person to take off one wafer from one side of the blade ; turn the knife two or three times again, and there will appear only two wafers on each side ; remove another wafer, turn the knife as before, and there will appear only one wafer on each side ; take the third wafer away, turn the knife as before twice or thrice, and there will appear to be no wafer

on either side. After a momentary pause, turn the knife again two or three times, and three wafers will appear on each side.

The secret of this capital trick consists in using wafers of the same size and color, and turning the knife, so that the same side is constantly presented to the view, and the wafers are taken off that side, one by one. The three wafers will thus remain untouched on the other side, so that when you have first made it appear that there are no wafers on either side, you may, apparently, show three on each, by the same means. The way to turn the knife is as follows ; when you lift it up, turn it in your hand, with your finger and thumb, completely round, until the side that was uppermost when you lifted it, comes uppermost again. This is done in an instant, and is not perceptible, if adroitly managed.

THE EGG IN THE PHIAL.

You may make an egg enter a phial without breaking, by steeping it in strong vinegar, for some

time ; the vinegar will so soften the shell, that it will bend and extend lengthways without breaking ; when put in cold water, it will resume its former figure and hardness.

TO REMOVE THE COLOR OF A RIBBON.

Dip a rose-colored ribbon into nitric acid, diluted with eight or ten parts of water, and as soon as the color disappears, which it will do in a short time, take out the ribbon, and put it into a very weak alkaline solution ; the alkali will quickly neutralize the acid, and the color will then re-appear.



CHAPTER XIV.

HOLIDAY NOTICES.

I now come to a notice of such holidays in the year, as are apt to be hailed by the young with eagerness and joy. And with what can I more appropriately commence my list than with

NEW YEAR'S DAY?

The custom of celebrating the birth-day of the year is very old, and prevalent among almost all nations. On this occasion, it is the practice of people to interchange wishes for each other's welfare ; and the young anticipate a harvest of presents and picture books. 'In New York, the good old

custom of paying visits, and reviving friendships on this day is still kept up. Public business of every kind is suspended; the courts, banks, custom-house, post-office, are all closed. Debtors being safe from arrest can boldly meet their creditors and wish them a happy new year.' Printed poetical addresses are on this day generally presented to the citizens, not only by the carriers of newspapers and other periodicals, but also, in some places, by the watchmen and lamp-lighters.

FIRST OF APRIL.

Antiquarians have been puzzled to trace to its origin the custom of fool-making; but their researches seem to have established nothing but that the practice is very ancient and very general. Not only does it prevail in America and in Europe, but it is said to be in full force among the Hindoos at the celebration of their Huli festival, which is kept on the 31st of March.

It is the custom on this day (although a custom, I think, which is far more honored in the breach than in the observance) for boys to practise tricks upon one another. When they succeed, they laugh at the person whom they think they have rendered ridiculous, and exclaim, ‘*Ah !* you April fool !’ Sometimes they will approach a man, and say — ‘Sir, if you please, there’s something *out* of your pocket.’ ‘Where?’ ‘There!’ ‘What?’ ‘Your *hand*, sir — Ah ! you April fool !’



Or else some lady is humbly bowed to, and gravely addressed with, ‘Ma’am, I beg your pardon, but you’ve *something on your face !*’ ‘Indeed,

my little man ! what is it ?' ' Your *nose*, ma'am — Ah ! you April fool.'

These jokes, if well-timed and not impertinent, are, perhaps, quite pardonable ; but not even the palliatory circumstance of its being April fool day can authorize tricks of a coarse or impudent character. My young readers will have the good taste to discriminate between the two.

MAY DAY.

How welcome both to young and old is the first breath of returning spring ! May day is not now celebrated with the same ceremonies, which hailed its approach of old. Still it is a custom with young persons to go into the fields on May morning, and gather some spare flowers and sprigs of green. — And sometimes a May Queen is chosen, who presides over the amusements of the day. There are few holidays more worthy of being observed than this.



May Morning.

INDEPENDENCE.

The anniversary of the declaration of independence is celebrated throughout the United States with great enthusiasm. Here it is the most popular holiday of the year, and on this day all the youthful companies of soldiers make it a point to display themselves. It is painful to reflect, however, that the day is sometimes dishonored by riotous and unbecoming hilarity.

THANKSGIVING.

This joyous anniversary takes place in autumn after the fruits of the earth are gathered in, and the toils of the farmer are rewarded with a plentiful harvest. The last of November or the first of December is generally appointed for this purpose by the governor, who issues a proclamation to that effect. After an attendance at church in the forenoon, and an expression of gratitude to the benefi-

cent Giver of all good, the remainder of the day is spent in social intercourse, and in partaking of the substantial bounties of the earth. This is the day for family meetings, and it is then that members of the same family often come hundreds of miles to collect again around the blazing hearth.

CHRISTMAS.

Christmas is the closing festival of the year, and it is usually celebrated with much joy. An article in a New York paper contains the following notices of this cheerful holiday : ‘ The throngs of happy children that we encounter in the streets, whose little smiling faces look almost blue with the cold, but whom wind and weather cannot restrain from sallying out to spend their holiday finances in the nearest toy-shop ; the greeting of “ a happy Christmas ” to you, that salutes our ears into whatever house we step, and for saying which the urchins expect a return, but not in kind ; and the peculiar nature of the amusements and sports around the evening fireside, where a sort of moral sunshine

diffuses itself, bright in proportion to the bleak and disagreeable state of external nature — all are but so many evidences of the undecaying spirit, with which this festive period of the year is still observed.'

VACATION.

Need I describe to the young the meaning of this welcome word? To those who have been industriously employed, who have attended to their lessons with proper care, and have no wasted opportunities to lament, vacation may indeed be welcome. On this occasion, the young inmates of the city generally go into the country to taste the novelty of rural life, and to roam with delight through the green fields. Here, in the language of the poet,

'The world is beautiful and new,
'The earth is filled with flowers and dew ;
Birds loudly sing on bush and spray,
And we more merrily than they.
We gather strength, we run, we leap,
Find joy in every thing — and sleep.'

The pleasures of the country are indeed many to the boy, whose life is passed mostly in the close confines of the city. And when the country lad leaves his happy home, and visits in return the crowded town, with its shops, its steeples, and its bustle, the contrast is not, perhaps, less new and pleasing.



CHAPTER XV.

THE RIDDLER.

THE custom of making riddles is very old, and were I to attempt to tell you all those which the ingenuity of mankind has invented, I should have to fill many volumes before I succeeded. A good riddle sometimes offers a pleasant exercise for the mind, when a cheerful circle of friends is gathered around the winter fireside. But the thought oftentimes expended on these occasions, might perhaps be bestowed on subjects more profitable and better calculated to furnish the mind with useful matters of reflection.

There are different kinds of riddles, and the names of charades, rebusses, conundrums and ana-

grams have been given to some of them. I will show you specimens of each of these, believing that it will be sufficient, if you have an idea of their character, and the manner of their formation.

CHARADES.

1.

My first do all nurses possess,
And dandle my second upon it ;
My whole is a part of the dress
Attached to the cap or the bonnet.

2.

Come from my First, ay, come !
The battle dawn is nigh ;
And the screaming trump and the thundering drum
Are calling thee to die !
Fight as thy father fought,
Fall as thy father fell ;
Thy task is taught, thy shroud is wrought ;
So, forward ! and farewell !

Toll ye, my Second ! toll !
Fling high the flambeau's light ;
And sing the hymn of a parted soul,
Beneath the silent night !
The wreath upon his head,
The cross upon his breast, —
Let the prayer be said, and the tear be shed :
So — take him to his rest.

Call ye my Whole, ay, call !
The lord of lute and lay ;
And let him greet the sable pall
With a noble song to-day.
Go, call him by his name ;
No fitter hand may crave
To light the flame of a soldier's fame
On the turf of a soldier's grave !

3.

A cat does my first, and men drink of the second ;
My whole is the drift of an argument reckon'd.

4.

My first is a part of the day,
My second at feasts overflows ;
In the cottage my whole is oft seen,
To measure old Time as he goes.

5.

My first is to ramble ; my next to retreat ;
My whole oft enrages in summer's fierce heat.

6.

My first is in most shops ;
In every window my second :
My whole is used for the bed,
And, in winter, a comfort is reckon'd.



ENIGMAS.

1.

He that in music takes delight,
And he that sleeps secure by night,
And he who sails too near the land,
And he that's caught by law's strong hand ;
He who his time in taverns spends,
And he that courts of law attends ;
He that explains heraldic signs,
And he that works in silver mines, —
Are all acquainted well with me :
My name you surely now must see.

2.

A lady in prison received an animal as a present from her niece, which signified to her 'make your escape;' in reply she sent back a fruit, which imported 'It is impossible to escape.' What was the animal, and what was the fruit ?

3.

Formed long ago, yet made to-day,
Employed while others sleep ;
What few would ever give away,
Or any wish to keep.

4.

A shining wit pronounced, of late,
That every acting magistrate
Was water in a freezing state.

REBUSSES.

1.

Reverse a snug apartment, and you'll find
A dreary marsh presented to your mind.

2.

I am found in a jail ; I belong to a fire ;
And am seen in a gutter abounding in mire.

Put my last letter third, and then 'twill be found
I belong to a king, without changing my sound.

3.

Two letters, expressing profusion and waste,
Transposed, show a county to most people's taste.

4.

A numeral, a pronoun, and a syllable, that, in sound, resembles the neighing of a horse, will compound that, without 'which, even a palace would prove an uncomfortable habitation.

ANAGRAMS.

1. No more stars. — 2. Hard case. — 3. Great helps. —
4. It's in charity. — 5. Evil fast. — 6. True I am in.

CONUNDRUMS.

1. What is that which is always invisible, yet never out of sight ?
2. Why is an avaricious man like one with a short memory ?

3. Why are there three objections to a glass of spirits ?
4. Why are fixed stars like pen, ink and paper ?
5. What is that which makes every one sick but those who swallow it ?
6. What step must I take to remove the letter A from the alphabet ?
7. Why is swearing like a ragged coat ?
8. When is a man over head and ears in debt ?
9. Why is a bee-hive like a spectator ?
10. What question is that to which you must answer yes ?
11. Why does the eye resemble a schoolmaster in the act of flogging ?
12. What burns to keep a secret ?
13. How can a man live only eighty years, and see only twenty birth-days ?
14. From what motive does a fisherman blow his horn in the market ?

SOLUTIONS.

CHARADES.

1. Lap-pet. — 2. Camp-bell. — 3. Pur-port. -- 4. Hour-glass.
 5. Gad-fly. — 6. Counter-pane.
-

ENIGMAS.

1. Bar. — 2. The animal sent was an Antelope (*Aunt elope.*) The fruit returned was a Cantelope (*Can't elope.*) —
3. A bed. — 4. Justice (*just-ice.*)

REBUSSES.

1. Room ; moor. — 2. Grate ; great. — 3. X. S. : S. X. —
4. C-him-ney, Chimney.

ANAGRAMS.

1. Astronomers. — 2. Charades. — 3. Telegraphs. — 4. Christianity. — 5. Festival. — 6. Miniature.

CONUNDRUMS.

1. The letter I, which is always invisible.
2. He is always forgetting (*for-getting.*)
3. Because there are three scruples to a dram.
4. They are stationary — (*stationery.*)

5. Flattery.
6. By B heading it — (*beheading it.*)
7. It is a bad habit.
8. When he has a hat on that is not paid for.
9. It is a bee-holder — (*beholder.*)
10. What does Y. E. S. spell ?
11. It has a pupil under the lash.
12. Sealing-wax.
13. He must be born on the 29th of February.
14. From a selfish motive (*Sell fish.*)





RENGER



